IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (twice amended) An assay for identifying a peptide or small organic compound that inhibits the specific interaction of a host cell protein, that is not a cell surface receptor protein, with a viral protein required for viral infection, replication, assembly or release, comprising:

(a) contacting a protein or a peptide [containing an amino acid sequence corresponding to] fragment comprising the binding site of the host cell protein with a protein or a peptide [having an amino acid sequence corresponding to] fragment comprising the binding site of the viral protein, under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit binding and the formation of a complex, in the presence of a test peptide or small organic compound, and

(b) detecting the formation of a complex, in which the ability of the test peptide or small organic compound to inhibit the interaction between the host cell protein and the viral protein is indicated by a decrease in complex formation as compared to the amount of complex formed in the absence of the test peptide or small organic compound.

2. (twice amended) An assay for identifying a peptide or small organic compound that inhibits the interaction of influenza virus nucleoprotein with a host cell protein comprising:

(a) contacting a protein or a peptide [containing an amino acid sequence corresponding to] fragment comprising the binding site of influenza virus nucleoprotein with a protein or a peptide [containing an amino acid sequence corresponding to] fragment comprising the binding site of the host cell protein, under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit binding and formation of a complex, in the presence of a test peptide or small organic compound, and

(b) detecting the formation of a complex, in which the ability of a test peptide or small organic compound to inhibit the interaction between influenza virus nucleoprotein and the host cell protein is indicated by a decrease in complex formation as compared to the amount of complex formed in the absence of the test peptide or small organic compound.

REMARKS

The claims have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that which the Applicants regard as the invention. Specifically, Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to specify proteins or peptide fragments comprising the respective binding sites of the specified proteins. Support for such proteins and peptide fragments can be found, in the specification at page 18, lines 22-27, and page 20, line 12, for example.